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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

DESIGNS FOR BENT IRON WORK.

BY MRS. HASTINGS R. LEES.

BENT IRON WORK is now a recognized and favorite work for amateurs in England, and is practiced not only by men and women, but is also taught to boys and girls in the numerous village schools which have been established of late years under the superintendence of ladies. The work has the advantage of being noiseless, inexpensive, and clean, is agreeable to do by artificial light—a matter of importance during an English winter—and requires but a few simple tools. Of materials, three widths of hand cut iron strips are required—one, three-eighths of an inch, for the parts that have to give support; a second, three sixteenths of an inch, for the light decorative curves and twists; and a third, one-eighth of an inch, for clamping the parts together. These, and wrought iron hooks, about seven inches long, can be obtained through any iron-monger. Brass can also be used for the work, but it has to be sent away to be lacquered afterward, while, if carried out in iron, the whole of it can be finished at home.

All the tools wanted, are a pair of round-nosed pliers (No. 1), a pair of long-nosed pliers (No. 2), a pair of strong flat-nosed pliers (No. 3), to bend and twist the iron, and a small pair of shears, called snips (No. 4), used by tinmen, to cut the iron. If larger or finer work is intended, the pliers must be of corresponding size. A pair of thick gloves to hold the iron strips, a tape yard measure to obtain the required lengths of the strips, and a bottle of artist black to paint the work when finished, complete the outfit for the work.

We illustrate a fire or window screen in reduced size, Fig. 1 A, being a working drawing one-fourth of the original. The screen can be worked from this size by repeating it eight times.

Fig. 2, is intended to show how shades can be worked in bent iron for the tall lamp stands which are now so fashionable. The stand itself does not come within the scope of an amateur worker; but the shade can, without difficulty, be carried out from the working drawing (Fig. 2 A), which has to be repeated six times.

BRILLIANT designs may be formed on steel surfaces by placing on them cards with cut out patterns and saturating these with a solution of sugar of lead. The card is connected with one end of a galvanic battery, and the steel with the other pole. On piercing the card, the figures start from it as a center, forming most beautiful corruscations on all the parts not exposed, the fantastic depositions of lead displaying iridescent hues.

THE decorative employment of brass is greatly extended by the fact that in addition to the fine gilding, its hues may be varied by what are known as "changing varnishes" or lacquers, through which the inherent brilliancy of



FIG. 1—FIRE OR WINDOW SCREEN.

the metal asserts itself.

Thus it may be made to assume beautiful red, a green with red iris glitter, a gold carmine, a light aniline blue, a reddish white and grayish green, an antique green and a moire color. To secure these the brass is immersed in different solutions; thus, green with iron hues is produced by placing the metal in a solution consisting of half an ounce of hypo sulphate of soda, dissolved in one pound of water, after an ounce of sulphuric acid is added, and the whole heated up to 19 deg. Fah. With acetate of lead taking the place of sulphuric acid under the same process, either carmine, aniline blue or reddish white will appear, according to the period spent in heating at the above temperature. A grayish green is imparted by a bath of copper, and a solution of antimony produces a violet glaze after rubbing the surface up with copper. On dipping the brass into a solution of sulphate of copper, the brass being heated, it assumes a moire color. An antique looking green hue is imparted by repeated applications of acetic acid to the brass followed by its exposure to the fumes of ammonia. An excellent lacquer for brass consists of seed-lac six ounces, amber or copal ground on marble, two ounces, dragons blood, forty grains, extract of red sandal wood, thirty-six grains, pounded glass, four ounces pure alcohol, twenty ounces. Articles or ornaments of brass to which this varnish is to be applied should be exposed to a gentle heat and then dipped into it.

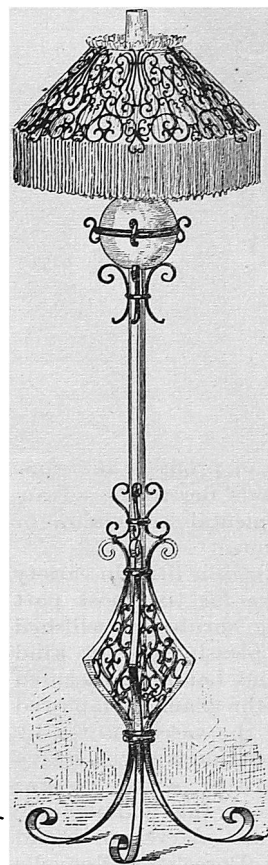


FIG. 2 LAMP SHADE AND STAND.

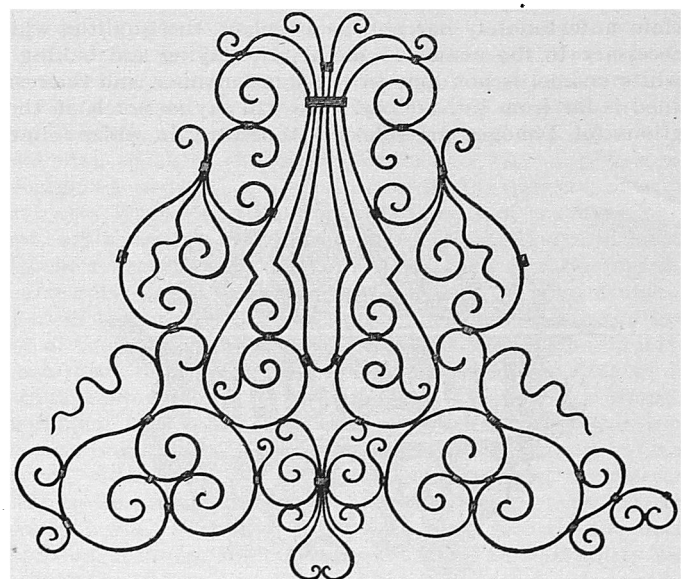


FIG. 2 A—DETAIL FOR LAMP SHADE.